

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13
SSM-05 ACDA-10 OMB-01 MC-02 IGA-02 TRSE-00 /085 W
-----161627Z 020658 /44

O R 161424Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6172
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 3449

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, IS, US
SUBJECT: PERES DISCUSSES ARMS TRANSFERS AND U.S./ISRAELI RELATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A SIGNIFICANT INTERVIEW BROADCAST
BY RADIO ISRAEL ON SATURDAY, MAY 14, ACTING PRIME
MINISTER PERES EXPRESSED HIS SATISFACTION WITH THE
PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS REGARDING ARMS TRANSFERS TO
ISRAEL. HE ALSO MADE PUBLIC REFERENCE FOR THE FIRST
TIME TO ISRAEL'S "CHARIOT" TANK PROGRAM AND REFERRED
TO THE NECESSITY FOR ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENT MILITARY
PRODUCTION CAPABILITY. HE SUMMED UP HIS
IMPRESSION OF THE CURRENT STATE OF U.S. POLICY IN
THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY
AND THE PRESIDENT EMPHASIZING (A) THE IMPORTANCE
OF THE U.S. ACTING AS AN HONEST BROKER; (B) A
"HOMELAND" FOR THE PALESTINIANS CANNOT RESULT IN AN
INDEPENDENT THIRD STATE ON THE WEST BANK; (C) ARAB
LEADERS ARE HAZY REGARDING THEIR DEFINITION OF
PEACE; (D) THERE CAN BE NO RETURN TO THE 1967
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BORDERS; AND (E) ISRAEL WILL CONTINUE TO INSIST
ON DEFENSIBLE BORDERS. END SUMMARY

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE QUESTIONS
AND ANSWERS IN THE INTERVIEW: BEGIN TEXT:

Q -- MR. PERES, HOW DO YOU RELATE TO PRESIDENT

CARTER'S DECLARATION REGARDING THE STATUS TO BE ACCORDED
ISRAEL IN THE MATTER OF THE SALE OF ARMS?

A -- WHAT THIS AMOUNTS TO, CLEARLY, IS A CONFIRMATION
OF THE PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS. IT IS AN EXPLICIT REFERENCE
TO ISRAEL WHICH DID NOT EXITS PREVIOUSLY IN DECLARATIONS
CONCERNING THE CLASSIFICATION OF STATES, AND AS I READ
THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER I FIND A NUMBER OF EXPRESSIONS
TO WHICH I THINK CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE ATTACHES. HE
REFERS BOTH TO THE MATTER OF ARMS AND TO THE MATTER OF
JOINT PRODUCTION. I HAVE ALSO READ WHAT HE SAID TO THE
SENATE. HE MAKES MENTION - EVEN, IT WOULD SEEM, SPECIAL
MENTION - OF THE PRODUCTION OF THE MERKAVA - OUR TANK.
HE SPEAKS OF SPECIAL SECURITY RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.
AND WHEN HE GETS DOWN TO SPECIFICS HE SAYS THAT THESE
HISTORICAL RELATIONS AND THE CONTINUOUS UNDERSTANDING
DERIVING BOTH FROM THE PAST AND THE PRESENT SITUATION,
AND NOTWITHSTANDING THE EFFORTS TO LIMIT THE ARMS RACE,
ISRAEL WILL NOT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AS CONCERNS --
AND THIS IS THE INTERESTING POINT -- HER DETERRENT ABILITY
AS WELL AS THE ARMS BALANCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THIS
IS MOST DEFINITELY A STRONG AND PRESIDENTIAL DECLARATION,
AND I RECEIVE IT WITH SATISFACTION. IN THIS LETTER TO
SENATOR HUMPHREY AND SENATOR CASE HE ALSO ADDS ANOTHER
ELEMENT WHICH IS IMPORTANT: HE SAYS THAT THE UNITED
STATES MUST BE AN "HONEST BROKER", BECAUSE AS YOU KNOW,
QUESTIONS AROSE AS TO WHETHER THE UNITED STATES WOULD
PUT FORWARD PROPOSALS OF ITS OWN, OR CONTINUE AS A MEDIATOR.
NOW, WE HAVE ALWAYS ACCEPTED MEDIATION GLADLY. BUT
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AS FOR PROPOSALS, WE HAVE ALSO SAID THAT THIS WILL LEAD
TO A CONFRONTATION, TO A DEBATE. THEREFORE WE CERTAINLY
PREFER THE UNITED STATES TO MEDIATE RATHER THAN TO SUBMIT
PROPOSALS OF ITS OWN.

2. Q -- DO YOU NOT RELATE TO THESE STATEMENTS AS SOMETHING
IN THE NATURE OF A TRANQUILIZER? FOR WHO KNOWS,
PERHAPS IN A FEW WEEKS' TIME IT WILL DEVELOP THAT THE
ADMINISTRATION IS USING WEAPONS AS A MEANS OF EXERTING
PRESSURE HESRE IN THE MIDDLE EAST ALL THE SAME?

A -- I WILL RELATE TO EACH SITUATION AS IT ARISES. I
CANNOT RELATE TO SPECULATION ABOUT SITUATIONS. I RELATE
WITH DUE GRAVITY TO EVERY DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED
STATES. BY NO MEANS DO I MAKE LIGHT OF IT . NOR DO I
INTEND TO RESORT TO ANY TRICKS. BUT HERE WE HAVE A
WRITTEN FORMULATION BY THE PRESIDENT. IF ANY CHANGES
COME ABOUT IN IT WE WILL REACT DIFFERENTLY.

3. Q -- WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS DECLARATION
FROM THE STANDPOINT OF OUR DEFENSE INDUSTRIES HERE
IN ISRAEL?

A -- AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE ALWAYS COUNTED ON THE CREATION
OF AN INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION SYSTEM. WE ARE A COUNTRY
WHICH IS RELATIVELY SMALL, YET WHICH ALL THE SAME MANU
FACTURES BOTH A PLANE OF ITS OWN, A TANK OF ITS OWN, AN
ARTILLERY PIECE OF ITS OWN AND A MISSILE OF ITS OWN. AND
NATURALLY, IN THIS MANUFACTURE WE REQUIRE ENGINES. FOR
EXAMPLE, ENGINES FOR PLANES AND FOR TANKS, AND ALL THESE
THINGS ARE BY NO MEANS A SECRET. THE PRESIDENT TOO HAS
SPOKEN ABOUT THEM OPENLY, AND I SEE IN HIS PROMISE A
CONSIDERABLE ALLEVIATION OF THE SITUATION AND A CONTINUATION
OF THE RELATIONSHIP WE ARE INTERESTED IN IN THE
AREA OF DEFENSE. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT DIFFERENCES
CANNOT ARISE, AND OF COURSE WE WILL UPHOLD OUR BASIC
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POSITIONS - THOSE WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR AND STRUGGLED OVER
-- WITH ALL OUR STRENGTH, AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO IN
THE FUTURE.

4. Q -- YOU HAVE REFERRED TO ONE WEAPON -- THE MERKAVA.
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO REFER TO ANOTHER -- THE F-16 AND THE
POSSIBILITIES FOR ITS MANUFACTURE HERE.

A -- IN THIS CONNECTION WE ARE ALSO WAITING FOR AN EXPLICIT

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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ANNOUNCEMENT. I AM NOT WILLING TO ENGAGE IN GUESSING GAMES. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT ISRAEL HAS THE CAPACITY TO PRODUCE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THE F-16, AND THIS SUBJECT IS NOW UNDER EXAMINATION. ALL DAY YESTERDAY WE WERE IN CONTACT WITH THE ADMINISTRATION, AND IN THE MATTER TOO I AM WAITING FOR AN UNEQUIVOCAL CLARIFICATION.

5. Q -- DOES THIS STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT CARTER DO AWAY UNEQUIVOCALLY WITH THE RUMORS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE UNITED STATES INTENDS TO STOP SUPPLYING THE ISRAEL AIR-CRAFT INDUSTRIES WITH REPLACEMENT PARTS OR RAW MATERIALS?

A -- THIS DECLARATION SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. I DO NOT THINK THAT I NEED BE ITS INTERPRETER. I HAVE DRAWN UP A PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF ALL THE PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AND I WOULD SUM UP MY IMPRESSIONS IN THESE AREAS AS FOLLOWS: THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENTS IN THE MATTER OF THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP ARE TO BE RECEIVED WITH SATISFACTION. THE MATTER OF JOINT UNCLASSIFIED

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PRODUCTION IS TO BE RECEIVED WITH SATISFACTION, WHAT HE HAS SAID IN THE MATTER OF DETERRENT CAPACITY IS TO BE RECEIVED WITH SATISFACTION, WHAT HE HAS SAID REGARDING THE NEED TO EQUALIZE THE AREM SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS TO BE RECEIVED WITH SATISFACTION -- WITH US IT IS NOT A QUANTITATIVE BUT RATHER A QUALITATIVE PROBLEM, AND HERE EXPLICIT THINGS HAVE BEEN SAID. THE PHRASE "HONEST BROKER" IS ALSO TO BE RECEIVED WITH SATISFACTION. ON THE OTHER HAND, WHAT STANDS IN NEED OF CLARIFICATION, IN MY OPINION -- AND EVEN BETWEEN FRIENDS CLEAR THINGS MUST BE SAID -- RESPECTFUL BUT VERY CLEAR -- IS THE MATTER OF THE "HOMELAND", WHICH YESTERDAY INCIDENTALLY WAS FORMULATED IN A WAY WHICH WAS SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT, MORE INTIMATE, BUT IN ANY CASE IT MAKES LITTLE DIFFERENCE -- THE HOMELAND OF THE PALESTINIANS, THE HOME OF THE PALESTINIANS, MUST BE IN A JORDANIAN CONTEXT. THERE IS NO PROSPECT OF ISRAEL, IN ANY WAY OR IN ANY SITUATION, AGREEING TO THE CREATION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE RIGHT OPPOSITE IT, OPPOSITE THE VERY HEART OF THE STATE, WITH ARAFAT AND HIS KATYUSHA ROCKETS, AND HIS GUNS, AND THE ENTIRE TERRORIST DEPLOYMENT FROM LEBANON. ON THIS WE

WILL INSIST, AND WILL BROOK NO ARGUMENT AT ALL. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE OUR POSITION CLEAR. THE THIRD THING WHICH I FEEL I SHOULD NOTE IS THIS: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT DESPITE ALL THE GOOD THINGS WHICH CAME ABOUT AS A RESULT OF THE MEETING BETWEEN THE U.S. PRESIDENT AND THE ARAB LEADERS, THE ARAB LEADERS HAVE LEFT THE MATTER OF PEACE IN A HAZE. THEY RESORTED TO SUBSTITUTES FOR PEACE, TO EVASIVE AND UNCLEAR FORMULATIONS - NORMALIZATION, CESSATION OF THE STATE OF WAR, "SULHA". WE WILL NOT GO ALONG WITH ANY VAGUE FORMULATION. IF PEACE, THEN PEACE. IF LESS, THEN LESS -- BUT FOR LESS THEY WILL RECEIVE LESS IN EXCHANGE. IT IS NOT AS IF WE WILL GIVE AS IF THERE WILL BE PEACE, AND THEY WILL GIVE US PKCE AS IT WERE. THERE IS NO SUCH ANIMAL. WE WILL INSIST CLEARLY AND FIRMLY ON THIS, AND I AM SAYING UNCLASSIFIED

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THIS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS, BECAUSE WE MUST RISE ABOVE ALL THE PRESENT HULLABALOO AND SEE THINGS AS THEY REALLY ARE. NATURALLY WE WILL TAKE GOOD CARE TO PRESERVE THE RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST AND RESPECT WITH THE UNITED STATES, BUT SUCH A RELATIONSHIP ALSO REQUIRES US TO MAKE OUR POSITION CLEAR.

6. THE FOURTH THING I MUST POINT OUT IS THAT TILL NOW, AS FAR AS I KNOW, NOT ONE ARAB LEADER HAS AGREED TO ANY TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE WHATSOEVER. ISRAEL WILL UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WITHDRAW TO THE BORDERS OF 1967. ISRAEL WILL NOT PERMIT JERUSALEM TO BE TOUCHED. WE CONSIDER THE JORDAN OUR DEFENSIVE BORDER AND THERE HAS BEEN NO EROSION OF OUR POSITION. AS WE HAVE DEBATED THE ISSUES WITH FORMER ADMINISTRATIONS, WE SHALL, IF NECESSARY, DEBATE THEM WITH THIS ADMINISTRATION -- WITH THE SAME MEASURE OF HONESTY AND OUTSPOKENNESS. THOSE ARE, IN FACT, THE ISSUES -- AND I HOPE AND TRUST I WILL FIND A COMMON LANGUAGE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER. THESE ARE NO NEW ISSUES, AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO CLARIFY THEM. I AM FURTHERMORE SURE THAT, GOING TO WASHINGTON, WE SHALL NOT BE CONFRONTED WITH ACCOMPLISHED FACTS. WE SHALL COME TO WASHINGTON FOR CLARIFICATIONS, AND I AM CONVINCED THAT NO U.S. POLICY HAS AS YET BEEN DEFINED, AND SURELY CANNOT HAVE BEEN DEFINED, EVEN REGARDING THE SUBJECT OF MEDIATION, WITHOUT PRIOR AND VERY LUCID CONTACT WITH US ON ALL SUBJECTS.

7. ONE FURTHER POINT: ISRAEL WILL INSIST ON DEFENSIBLE BORDERS. DEMILITARIZED ZONES AND EARLY WARNING STATIONS CAN BE ADDITIONAL MEASURES, BUT ON NO ACCOUNT A SUBSTITUTE FOR DEFENSIBLE BORDERS. WHICH MUST PROVIDE A DEFENSE FOR ISRAEL. WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO ACCEPT OUTSIDE GUARANTEES AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR OUR ABILITY TO DEFEND OURSELVES,

AR AS AN ALTERNATIVE FOR BORDERS ALONG WHICH WE CAN DEFEND
OUR LIVES.

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8. I WANT TO MAKE THIS UNEQUIVOCALLY CLEAR ONCE
MORE. I KNOW THAT IF WE ARE PLIABLE NOW, TOMOORROW WE
SHALL EARN THE APPLAUSE OF "LE MONDE" OR SOME OTHER
PAPER. BUT WE MUST ALOS THINK OF THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW
-- AND NOT ONLY OF TOMORROW. TOMORROW WE SHALL BE COMMENDED
BY THE PRESS, AND THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW WE SHALL
BE ATTACKED BY SHOULDER-MISSILES. NO ISRAELI STATESMAN
CAN LOOK AT HEADLINES WITHOUT LOOKING TO THE FUTURE.
END TEXT.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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